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### COUNTRY PROFILES

#### GEORGIA

##### 1. Overall structure of environmental governance

The Ministry of Environment Protection and Natural Resources (MEPNR) is responsible for environmental management in Georgia. MEPNR ensures State management in the sphere of environmental protection and rational use of natural resources, as well as environmental safety of the population. The Ministry comprises six regional divisions.

The following three State sub-Agency Organizations operate under MEPNR:

- Inspection of Environmental Protection
- Forestry Department
- Department of Investigation.

In addition, under MEPNR there exist four semi-governmental organizations that can maintain their own resources through public services they offer:

- Sustainable Development Projects Implementation Agency
- Basic Sapling Forestry Farm
- Agency of Protected Areas
- National Environmental Agency (NEA).

##### *Interagency Cooperation Mechanisms*

The following state bodies are to a different extent responsible for environmental and natural resource protection.

One of the core tasks of the Ministry of Labour, Health and Social Affairs is to ensure the protection of public health. The *National Report on Health Condition of Georgian*

*Citizens* issued annually by the Ministry reflects the impact of environmental conditions on public health, particularly the sanitary condition of ambient air, the sanitary condition of water supply and ionizing radiation.

One of the main tasks of the Ministry of Economic Development is to issue licenses for the use of natural resources and approve quotes in consultation with MEPNR.

The Ministry of Education and Science has a key role in advancing environmental awareness among the public.

The Ministry of Agriculture is responsible for drinking water quality monitoring.

## 2. Multilateral Environmental Agreements and Obligations

Georgia is a party to 16 international environmental convention and 3 protocols (see Table 1). Georgia has ratified the relevant international and regional conventions to which it is signatory, with the exception of the Protocol on Strategic Environmental Assessment to the Convention on Environmental Impact Assessment in a Transboundary Context. Moreover, Georgia has not signed the Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes (Water Convention). Currently, through the Environment and Security initiative, Georgian Ministry of Environment works closely with the Water Convention Secretariat to identify institutional and legislative needs to join this Convention.

**Table 1. Participation of Georgia in Multilateral Environmental Agreements and Programmes**

No.	Agreement/Programme	Date of ratification (Rt), accession (Ac), approval (Ap), adoption (At) entry into force (EIF)
<b>Global</b>		
1.	UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (New-York, 1992)	29.07.1994 (Rt)
	Kyoto Protocol (Kyoto, 1997)	16.06.1999 (Ac)
2.	Convention for the Protection of the Ozone Layer (Vienna, 1985)	21.03.1996 (Ac)
	Montreal Protocol on Ozone Depleting Substances (Montreal, 1987)	21.03.1996 (Ac)
3.	Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants (Stockholm, 2001)	04.10.2006 (Rt)
4.	Convention on Biological Diversity (Rio-de-Janeiro, 1992)	02.06.1994 (Ac)
	Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety, 2000	04.11.2008 (Ac)
5.	Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movement of Hazardous Wastes and their Disposal (Basel, 1989)	20.05.1999 (Ac)
6.	Convention to Combat Desertification (Paris, 1994)	23.07.1999 (Rt)

7.	Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage (Paris, 1972)	04.11.1992 <sup>1</sup>
8.	International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships, 1973, as modified by the Protocol of 1978 relating thereto	01.02.1992 (EIF)
9.	Convention on the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources (Canberra, 1980)	
10.	Protocol on Environmental Protection to the Antarctic Treaty (Madrid, 1991)	
11.	Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (Washington, 1973)	12.12.1996 (EIF)
12.	Convention on Wetlands of International Importance Especially as Waterfowl Habitat (Ramsar, 1971)	07.06.1997 (EIF)
13.	Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (Bonn, 1979)	01.06.2000 (EIF)
	Agreement on the Conservation of Populations of European Bats	25.07.2002
	Agreement on the Conservation of African-Eurasian Migratory Waterbirds	01.08.2001 (EIF)
	Agreement on the Conservation of Cetaceans of the Black Sea, Mediterranean Sea and contiguous Atlantic Area	30.03.2001 (Rt)
14.	International Convention for the Regulation of Whaling (Washington, 1946)	
15.	Global Forest Resources Assessment (FAO)	Participates
<b>Regional</b>		
16.	Convention on Long-range Transboundary Air Pollution (Geneva, 1979)	11.02.1999 (Ac)
	Protocol on Long-term Financing of the Cooperative Programme for Monitoring and Evaluation of the Long-range Transmission of Air Pollutants in Europe (EMEP) - 1984	
	Protocol on the Reduction of the Sulphur Emissions or their Transboundary Fluxes by at least 30 per cent, 1985	
	Protocol on Limitation of Emissions of Nitrogen Oxides or their Transboundary Fluxes, 1988	
	Protocol on Limitation of Emissions of Volatile Organic Compounds or their Transboundary Fluxes, 1991	
	Protocol on Further Reduction of Sulphur Emissions, 1994	
	Protocol on Heavy Metals, 1998	
	Protocol on Persistent Organic Pollutants, 1998	
	Protocol to Control Oxidation, Eutrophication and Ground Ozone, 1999	
	International Co-operative Programme on Assessment and Monitoring of Air Pollution Effects on Forests (ICP Forests)	
17.	Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes (Helsinki, 1992)	
	Protocol on Water and Health (London, 1999)	

<sup>1</sup> Declarations of succession.

18.	Convention on the Transboundary Effects of Industrial Accidents (Helsinki, 1992)	
19.	Convention on Environmental Impact Assessment in a Transboundary Context (Espoo, 1991)	
	Protocol on Strategic Environmental Assessment (Kiev, 2003)	
20.	Convention on Access to Information, Public Participation in Decision-Making and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters (Aarhus, 1998)	11.04.2000 (Rt)
	Protocol on Pollutant Release and Transfer Register (Kiev, 2003)	
21.	Convention on the Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats (Bern, 1979)	11.03.2010 (EIF)
<b>Subregional</b>		
22.	Convention on the Protection of the Black Sea Against Pollution (Black Sea Convention) – Bucharest, 1992.	01.09.1993 (Rt)
	Protocol on the Protection of the Marine Environment of the Black Sea from Land-Based Sources and Activities (1992)	01.09.1993 (Rt)

Georgia has systematically submitted obligatory and voluntary reports to international organisations and secretariats of multilateral environmental agreement (MEAs) to which it is a party. Progress in compliance with reporting requirements has been facilitated by the creation in March 2009 of a database that includes reports to secretariats of conventions.

In 2009, Georgia together with UNDP prepared the Second National Communication on the Implementation of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change. The text in English is available on the Secretariat website <http://unfccc.int/resource/docs/natc/geonc2.pdf>.

Georgia submits to the Secretariat of the Convention for the Protection of the Ozone Layer on an annual basis data on the consumption of ozone depleting substances. The last report was submitted for 2009.

During the preparation of the present country profile Georgia has still not submitted the National Implementation Plan of the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants, although the deadline for plan submission was 02.01.2009 (<http://chm.pops.int/Countries/National%20Implementation/tabid/253/language/en-US/Default.aspx>).

In 2010, Georgia submitted to the Convention on Biodiversity Secretariat the Second, Third and Fourth National Reports on Biodiversity, available respectively on <http://www.cbd.int/doc/world/ge/ge-nr-02-en.pdf>, <http://www.cbd.int/doc/world/ge/ge-nr-03-en.pdf> and <http://www.cbd.int/doc/world/ge/ge-nr-04-en.pdf>.

Georgia submitted to the Secretariat of the Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Waste and its Disposal reports for 2003, 2004 and 2006. Reports for 2005, 2007 and 2008 have not been submitted.

Georgia meets its obligations on reporting within the framework of the UN Convention to Combat Desertification. The Third National Report on Implementation of the

Convention was submitted in 2006 (<http://www.unccd.int/cop/reports/centraleu/national/2006/georgia-eng.pdf>). The fourth national report is planned for 2010.

In 2009, Georgia submitted the annual report for 2008 on the implementation of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora.

Georgia submitted annual reports on implementation of the Agreement on the Conservation of Populations of European Bats for 2001-2006. After a two-year break, in 2009, the *Update to the National Report on the Implementation of the Agreement in Georgia* was submitted. It is available on the EUROBATS website: [http://www.eurobats.org/documents/pdf/National\\_Reports/nat\\_rep\\_Geo\\_2009.pdf](http://www.eurobats.org/documents/pdf/National_Reports/nat_rep_Geo_2009.pdf).

In 2004, Georgia submitted the first National report on implementation of the Agreement on the Conservation of Cetaceans of the Black Sea, Mediterranean Sea and contiguous Atlantic Area. The second National report has been prepared for the Third meeting of the parties in 2007. The report is available on the ACCOBAMS website: [http://www.accobams.org/index.php?option=com\\_docman&task=doc\\_download&gid=71&Itemid=50](http://www.accobams.org/index.php?option=com_docman&task=doc_download&gid=71&Itemid=50).

Georgia has prepared the Forest Resources Assessment Country Report according to the FAO Global Forest Resources Assessment 2010. The report is available on the FAO website: <http://www.fao.org/forestry/20262-1-160.pdf>.

Georgia has not signed or acceded to any of the eight protocols under the Convention on Long-Range Transboundary Air Pollution. Georgia submitted data to the Convention Secretariat in 2006, 2007 and 2008.

In 2005, the Georgian Aarhus Centre was established as a joint initiative of the OSCE Mission and MEPNR. The aim of the Centre is to support the Ministry in its efforts to meet the obligations and responsibilities defined in the Aarhus Convention. The Centre provides access to environmental information on its constantly updated website. It monitors public participation in the environmental impact assessment process and organises environmental awareness campaigns. In 2008, Georgia submitted the report on the implementation of the Aarhus Convention. ([http://www.unece.org/env/documents/2008/pp/mop3/ece\\_mp\\_pp\\_ir\\_2008\\_GEO\\_e.pdf](http://www.unece.org/env/documents/2008/pp/mop3/ece_mp_pp_ir_2008_GEO_e.pdf)).

Georgia is a party to the Black Sea Convention and reports to the Commission on the Protection of the Black Sea against pollution (Black Sea Commission); it also participates in projects of the Black Sea Information System (BSIS) – <http://www.blacksea-commission.org/bsis-description.asp>, and the Black Sea Integrated Monitoring and Assessment Programme (BSMAP) – <http://www.blacksea-commission.org/bsimap.asp>.

The following organisations perform monitoring and reporting:

- National Environmental Agency together with its branch in Ajara (Black Sea Monitoring Centre-Batumi)
- MEPNR – pollution from Land Based Sources of Pollution
- Ministry of Transport – Environmental Safety Aspects of Shipping (ESAS).

The *'Diagnostic Report' to guide improvements to the regular reporting process on the state of Black Sea Environment* submitted to the EEA by the Permanent Secretariat of the

Black Sea Commission states that in 2007 and 2008 monitoring and reporting were organized in a more efficient way in terms of spatial and temporal coverage and the quality of reported data is good. The following drawbacks in monitoring and reporting are mentioned in report:

- Presented data not always corresponds to requirements (not all mandatory parameters are observed);
- Monitoring of pollution of sediments, biota and fish resources is not carried out;
- Recommended frequency of observations is not observed;
- Coastal and Marine stations are not observed;
- Research Vessels are small and old;
- Reference stations are not available;
- Ecosystem approach in monitoring is absent; therefore the data can be used only for independent analysis of water quality or biodiversity;
- Bathing water monitoring is conducted partly.

Main problems include the absence of an integrated system of monitoring, lack of coordination between the organisations responsible for monitoring and insufficient financing. Financial assistance for monitoring and reporting is not provided by the government, but in the frames of different projects.

### **3. Environmental Data Management**

#### *Information Management and Reporting*

Georgia does not have either an integrated or an interconnected environmental database, neither does it have a comprehensive information resource facilitating the search for required information. This makes difficult the search for national reports on environment and action plans, strategies, etc. Information is mostly stored on paper and is owned by different organizations, it does not frequently exist electronically.

Some ministries and agencies set up their own decentralized environmental databases according to their own protocols and procedures.

Coordination and data exchange between agencies responsible for environmental monitoring are irregular and more often than not are the result of personal initiatives.

In 2009, MEPNR launched a project on the enhancing the institutional potential for the development of a national PRTR inventory and the support of SAICM in Georgia. By implementing this project the Ministry plans to meet its obligations on collecting emission and pollutant transfer data in order to start compiling a national PRTR inventory.

#### *Environmental Statistics*

Data on emissions into the atmosphere of pollutants from stationary sources are collected on the basis of national reporting form *Pollutant emissions into the atmosphere*. The paper forms are filled out by companies and forwarded to MEPNR. Among others, the form includes indicators on dust, SO<sub>2</sub>, NO<sub>x</sub>, CO, hydrocarbons, CO<sub>2</sub> and some NMVOC and POP emissions. Data on heavy metal emissions and fine particles PM<sub>10</sub> and PM<sub>2,5</sub> are collected fragmentarily. The submitted data is processed at the MEPNR.

Measuring the amounts of pollutant emissions from mobile sources (road transport) is calculated by MEPNR on the basis of data on the actual consumption of fuel and relevant emission coefficients.

Data on water resources are annually gathered by MEPNR on the basis of the official statistical reporting form *Water consumption*.

Aggregated data are then forwarded to the Georgian National Statistics Service. Some of the data are then published in the *Statistical Report on Natural Resources and Environment Protection in Georgia* and in the *Statistical Yearbook of Georgia*.

Georgia does not collect statistics on the generation, processing and recycling as well as the disposal of waste. In 2007, MEPNR conducted full waste inventory in Georgia that includes municipal, industrial, medical and biological wastes both on the national, as well as regional scales. Results of the inventory were published in 2009 in the national language.

Data on the production, import and export of ozone depleting substances are collected by MEPNR with the support of an international project and the Georgian Refrigeration Association. Aggregated data are submitted to the Ozone Secretariat of UNEP. The imported substances are registered and fed into a database managed by MEPNR.

The *Law on Official Statistics* from December 11<sup>th</sup>, 2009, and the *Charter on the National Statistics Service* approved by the President on February 1<sup>st</sup>, 2010, determined the main functions of the National Statistics Service (NSS) regarding the collection and production of official environmental statistics. The territorial divisions should collect, process and manage environmental statistical data. In spite of this, the NSS has significantly reduced the amount of environmental data it collects. As a result, the statistics published in environmental reports and the statistical yearbook and which are based on the data received MEPNR are unreliable and the time series are incomplete.

NSS has a website available in the national and English languages at <http://www.geostat.ge>.

The *Statistical Yearbook of Georgia 2009* was published in the national and English languages and is available in PDF at <http://www.geostat.ge/index.php?action=wnews&lang=eng&npid=2>). The Yearbook has a chapter on natural resources and environmental protection with following data for 2002-2008:

- Forest land and forest reserves;
- Fresh water consumption;
- Waste water discharge into surface water bodies;
- Number of stationary air pollution sources;
- Pollutant emissions into the atmosphere from stationary and mobile sources;
- Number and area of natural reserves and protected territories.

The statistical publication *Natural Resources and Environmental Protection in Georgia in 2008* is available only in the national language at [http://www.geostat.ge/cms/site\\_images/files/georgian/agriculture/saqarTvelos%20bunebrivi%20resursebi%20da%20garemos%20dacva\\_2008.pdf](http://www.geostat.ge/cms/site_images/files/georgian/agriculture/saqarTvelos%20bunebrivi%20resursebi%20da%20garemos%20dacva_2008.pdf)

The following statistical data are available (not online) in the NSS:

- Wooded area and Forest Reserves of Georgia at the country level;
- Sowing, planting and rehabilitation of forests, on country and region level;
- Area of protected territories of Georgia, by protected territories;
- Numbers of animals protected in national parks and reserves, by types of animals;
- Water abstraction from natural sources, on country and region level, as well as by cities;
- Water use, on country and region level, as well as by cities;
- Water discharge to surface water bodies, at the country and region levels as well as by cities;
- Pollutant emission from stationary sources and their treatment at the country and region levels;
- Pollutant emission by motor transport at country level;
- Mineral and organic fertilizers used by agricultural holdings and fertilized area under annual and permanent crops, final data at the country and region levels;

#### **4. Environmental Monitoring**

The National Environmental Agency (NEA) within MEPNR is the authorised body for the national environmental monitoring system. The laboratories attached to NEA are supplied with modern and reliable equipment through international projects, but require national accreditation.

NEA does not upload monitoring information on its website. It publishes a limited number of copies of monthly bulletins *Pollution of Natural Environment in Georgia* that include monitoring data on air and water quality and on radiation. They are not easily accessible to the public. Since 2009, however, NEA sends them to the Aarhus Centre which posts them on its website (<http://aarhus.ge/index.php?page=113&lang=geo>). This information is available in the national language.

##### *Air Quality Monitoring*

Open air monitoring is performed at monitoring points of NEA. Currently, regular air pollution monitoring is performed in 5 cities. Each city has only one monitoring station, measuring the concentration of main polluting substances (in particularly dust, SO<sub>2</sub>, NO<sub>2</sub> and CO). In addition, in Tbilisi concentration of lead is measured, and in Zestafoni – concentration of manganese.

There is one EMEP station in the town of Abastumani for monitoring transboundary air pollution.

Monitoring data are forwarded to NEA for processing and integrating into its database. Based on monitoring results, NEA publishes the monthly information bulletin *Review on Contamination of Environment in Georgia* and the annual *Report on the Pollution of Atmospheric Air*. These publications exist only on paper. Back in 2009 there were plans to post the data on the Agency website, however, until now this has not been done.

##### *Surface Water Quality Monitoring*

Monitoring of surface water pollution is performed monthly by NEA on 22 major rivers at 43 points according to ISO standards. 33 to 35 indicators are measured, among them: BOD<sub>5</sub>, NH<sub>4</sub><sup>+</sup>, biogenic substances (phosphates, nitrates).

Regarding water quality monitoring, Georgia cooperates with Armenia on the Debed River catchment area and with Armenia and Azerbaijan on the Kura River catchment area.

The Joint River Monitoring (JRM) for transboundary area of the Kura-Aras river basin is being carried out by the three national monitoring agencies of the South Caucasus countries. This is a pilot activity under the EU funded project: Trans-Boundary River Management Phase II for the Kura River Basin – Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia ([www.kuraarasbasin.net](http://www.kuraarasbasin.net)). The main objective of the JRM is to harmonize water pollution sampling, analysing and reporting methodologies in these countries and support their cooperation that may lead to a regular transboundary monitoring in a future. Since 2009, joint sampling has been conducted four times a year at six observation points in all three countries (four points are in Georgia). Data interpretation remains a problem due to difference in MACs in the three countries.

There have been other transboundary water projects in South Caucasus that worked on of water quality and quantity monitoring issues and left behind some good results in the form of institutional/technical support, including collection and processing of monitoring data. One example is ‘South Caucasus River Monitoring’ funded by NATO and OSCE that, among others, was carrying out regular monthly monitoring at 35 monitoring stations in the three countries during 2002-2007. The data is available on-line ([www.kura-araks-natosfp.org](http://www.kura-araks-natosfp.org)) and can be received on demand through the responsible national agencies.

#### *Black Sea Water Quality Monitoring*

The Black Sea Monitoring Centre in Batumi sporadically monitors some chemical and hydrobiological parameters in the sea waters. During the recreational season, the Centre takes bathing water samples at some ten observation points. It analyses physical and chemical parameters as well as zoobenthos, zooplankton and phytoplankton.

#### *Biodiversity Monitoring, including Forest Monitoring*

No overall state inventory of forests has been conducted for some 20 years. There is no reliable countywide data on forest areas, forest stock and forest fires. Forest data for 2002-2008 published by NSS remains invariable that confirms that there are no updated data. Recently the GTZ office in Georgia has launched a new project *Classifying and Monitoring Forests and Land Cover in Georgia* that with the help of modern GIS and Remote Sensing technology will prepare an inventory of forest data. It is expected preliminary results of this exercise will be available early spring next year.

Various governmental and non-governmental organisations monitor wildlife species. To promote data exchange, MEPNR has developed a Concept of Developing Biodiversity Monitoring. The institutions concerned agreed on principles for data submission to MEPNR including 25 biodiversity indicators grouped on the basis of the State-Pressure-Response approach. These indicators were approved by MEPNR in 2009. The development of a methodology for monitoring each indicator is underway. Practical biodiversity monitoring

activities are expected to be launched in 2010. Species selected for monitoring are those that are threatened or have economic value.

The preparation of a habitat classification system following the Natura 2000 methodology is underway.

MEPNR established a Coordinating Council and created dedicated website ([www.biomonitoring.moe.gov.ge](http://www.biomonitoring.moe.gov.ge)) on nationwide biodiversity monitoring.

## 5. National Environmental Internet Portals

The website of MEPNR can be found at <http://www.moe.gov.ge/>, and data are available in the national and English languages.

Two agencies and two organisations, which are subordinated to MEPNR or are in the sphere of its governance, have also the websites available in the national and English languages:

- Forestry Department – <http://www.forestry.gov.ge/>
- Inspection of Environmental Protection – <http://www.gdi.gov.ge/>
- Agency of Protected Areas – <http://www.dpa.gov.ge/>
- NEA – <http://www.nea.gov.ge/>

The website of NSS is available on <http://www.geostat.ge> in the national and English languages.

Data on biodiversity of species of Georgia are published on the website initiated by the Faculty of Natural Sciences of Ilia Chavchavadze University - Georgian Biodiversity Database ([www.biodiversity-georgia.net](http://www.biodiversity-georgia.net)). This internet resource aims to make the world-wide scientific (and not only scientific) community aware of biological diversity of Georgia (and, to a certain extent, of the Caucasus ecoregion).

The Aarhus Centre in Georgia is accessible at <http://aarhus.ge/index.php?lang=eng&page=1> in the national, English and Russian languages.

Data on the website of the Caucasus Regional Environmental Centre are available in the English and Russian languages at <http://www.rec-caucasus.org/>.

The Georgian Designated National Agency for International Data and Information exchange (GeoDNA) was established as a unit of the IOC/UNESCO International Oceanographic Data and Information Exchange (IODE) Programme in 2001 for scientific and educational purposes at the Iv. Javakhishvili Tbilisi State University. Its mission is to collect, acquire process, store and disseminate the marine data and metadata sampled by Georgian institutes and agencies. Its main objective is to facilitate the access to marine information, to promote the development of indicators on marine science, technology, environment and socio-economics, as well as to encourage cooperation between national and European institutions.

The Agency has a website in English on <http://www.oceandata.ge/>. The website gives access to metadata on marine environment as well as to a list of scientific centres and their projects

with active links to the former and the latter. GeoDNA participates in the FP7 EU funded project UP-GRADE Black Sea SCENE (2009-2011) – <http://www.blackseascene.net/>.

A site of the EU funded regional *Project on Environmental Collaboration for the Black Sea (ECBSea)* was launched in Georgia, Moldova, Russia and Ukraine (<http://www.ecbsea.org/en/>). The site is available in the English and Ukrainian languages.

## **6. Environmental Assessments and Use of Environmental Indicators**

Following the Law on Environmental Protection, in 2001 to 2006, MEPNR was preparing annual national environmental reports which were submitted to the President of Georgia for approval. None of these reports were published. All approved reports, excluding the 2006 report that was not approved, are posted on the Aarhus Centre's website (<http://aarhus.ge/index.php?lang=rus&page=105>). The 2006 report was placed on the website of MEPNR. The reports are available only in the national language.

The above reports contained aggregated information on the quality of environment, Georgia's policy on nature protection and the results of current projects and actions, etc. In particular the reports contained information on air, water, land and mineral resources; flora and fauna; protected areas, radiation, natural and man-made disasters, waste, chemicals, monitoring systems, national legislation, international obligations, environmental education and environmental impact on human health.

These reports were largely descriptive and did not use internationally agreed environmental indicators.

MEPNR lacks expertise and resources to produce environment assessment reports of the scope and content recommended by the *UNECE Guidelines for the Application of Environmental Indicators in Eastern Europe, Caucasus and Central Asia*.

According to the Georgian legislation, as of 2007 the national report should be prepared once in three years. The Presidential Decree approved the *Rules for the Preparation of State-of-the-environment Reports*. This document specifies the legal basis of the reports, its submission to the President of Georgia as well as defines the structure of the report and public access to it through publication.

Currently the EC is supporting the preparation of the environmental report for 2007-2009 which will be completed in 2010.

## **7. Identification and Analysis of Gaps and Bottlenecks**

Georgia has neither an integrated environmental data base nor a universal information resource providing prompt access to required information. Due to this, the process of preparing national environmental reports, action plans becomes more complicated.

Currently Georgia does not perform regular and systemic environmental monitoring and data analysis.

Web interfaces used do not give access to real time data, there are no applications allowing for computer-based and standardised collection of data and their verification.

NSS has significantly reduced the amount of environmental data collected. As a result, environmental data published by NSS in environmental compendia and statistical yearbooks and based on MEPNR data, is unreliable and has gaps in time series.

Since 2007, national environmental reports have not been published. Previous reports were of a descriptive character and did not use the internationally agreed environmental indicators.

In the near future Georgia has to make a broader use of environmental indicators, identified in the *UNECE Guidelines for the Application of Environmental Indicators in Eastern Europe, Caucasus and Central Asia*, in the national state of environment reports that will require regular data flows in all important spheres of environment and economy.